**A GUIDE FOR DUTY OF CARE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY**

**WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF BUNBURY**

Caring for the Young People in Our Diocese

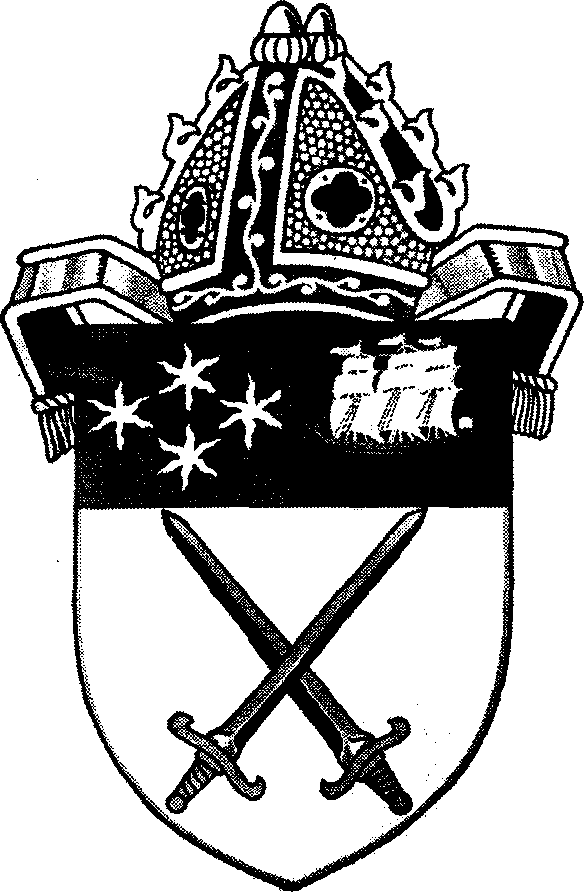
The Diocese of Bunbury

Children and Youth Ministry Council

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TOC \o 1-1 \t "Heading 3, 2"

Protection of Young People in our Care: PAGEREF \_Toc \h iii

Child Abuse PAGEREF \_Toc1 \h iii

Definition: Child abuse is the maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years. It is the result of action or non-action on the part of an older person which results in harm or injury to a child. It may also delay physical or intellectual development. PAGEREF \_Toc2 \h iii

Facts about Abuse: PAGEREF \_Toc3 \h iii

Types of Abuse: PAGEREF \_Toc4 \h iii

Reporting of Child Abuse PAGEREF \_Toc5 \h iii

Children and Youth Ministry Leader Applicant Statement PAGEREF \_Toc6 \h iii

Conduct and Vulnerability of Leaders PAGEREF \_Toc7 \h iii

Leaders' Vehicles PAGEREF \_Toc8 \h iii

Leader Application Form PAGEREF \_Toc9 \h v

Safety PAGEREF \_Toc10 \h vi

Minimise Risk of Injury PAGEREF \_Toc11 \h vi

Each Leader Should Have an Awareness of: PAGEREF \_Toc12 \h vi

Be Aware of the Location of: PAGEREF \_Toc13 \h vi

When traveling on a bus/train: Follow regular bus rules: PAGEREF \_Toc14 \h vi

Other Safety Requirements: PAGEREF \_Toc15 \h vi

Children’s Personal Hygiene: PAGEREF \_Toc16 \h viii

Handling Food: PAGEREF \_Toc17 \h viii

Emergencies PAGEREF \_Toc18 \h viii

Note: Nothing in this document shall be seen to remove the Bishop’s right to withhold the issuing of a Lay Ministers License.

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THE DIOCESE OF BUNBURY

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY COUNCIL

Duty of Care Documentation

Guidelines for Implementation in Parishes/ Ministry Districts

The Guidelines for Duty of Care, Leader Conduct and Screening and Safety, Hygiene and Emergencies in Children and Youth Ministry help fulfill the Church’s moral and biblical responsibility for Duty of Care. They also provide a good foundation for legal issues relating to care of minors.

The *Guidelines for Implementation in Parishes/ Ministry Districts* is an important document that should be understood and adhered to by the Parish Priest in consultation with the Parish/ Ministry District Council. Each of the parish wardens should have knowledge of the guidelines for implementation.

Implementing the “Duty of Care”

1. In the initial stage each Parish/ Ministry District council should be made aware of the Duty of Care documents and discuss at one of its meetings these guidelines for implementation.
2. A list of people who are currently involved in children and youth ministry at whatever level in the Parish/ Ministry District should be compiled by the Parish/ Ministry District Council or a representative).
3. Each person (leader) on this list should be given this document package and be asked to study the guidelines carefully.
4. Each ‘leader’ will then be required to fill out the Leader Application Form. This form is to be lodged with the priest (or delegated person). The Parish/ Ministry District priest will then check the suitability of this person to work with young people under 18 years, (by speaking with the referees) before forwarding to the Diocesan Office.
5. Where a parish does not have a current priest then the tasks of receiving the leader application form and screening leaders is in the hands of the wardens in consultation with the Parish/ Ministry District council.
6. In the screening process the Parish/ Ministry District priest may ask an applicant to acquire a Working With Children Check clearance. The Parish/ Ministry District may offer to pay the cost of this clearance.
7. The leader application forms should be filed in a secure place in the Parish/ Ministry District or priest’s office: with a copy being sent to the Diocesan Office.
8. It is suggested that each parish/ Ministry District should have a meeting of all people involved in Children and Youth ministry to discuss the Duty of Care documents and Leader Screening.
9. New people to the Parish/ Ministry District and people currently involved in the Parish/ Ministry District who wish to be involved in children and Youth Ministry will be required to go through this screening process.

Note: For the purposes of this document a leader is any person who has any responsibility or contact with children or teenagers in any regular or organized church activity that involves children and teenagers.

Duty of Care

The church should be a place where young people can come to know the love of God through those who care for and work for them. We have a biblical mandate to be proactive for the safety and care of young people in our midst. The church’s responsibility in ministry with young people requires us to think and act clearly about the issue of care and safety. It is the intention of this document to give churches clear guidelines of minimum standards of duty of care.

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THE DIOCESE OF BUNBURY

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY COUNCIL

Duty of Care Documentation

### Protection of Young People in our Care:

Young people have the right to feel protected and safe. They have the right to an environment where their protection is of high importance. It is hoped that all leaders in children and youth ministry in the church will respect these rights.

When young people participate in the church’s children and youth ministry programs their parents (or guardians) pass on the responsibility of their care to the leaders of the programs. Therefore it is important that the leaders are familiar with the duty of care issues spelt out in these guidelines.

### Child Abuse

### Definition: Child abuse is the maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years. It is the result of action or non-action on the part of an older person which results in harm or injury to a child. It may also delay physical or intellectual development.

### Facts about Abuse:

* Child abuse happens everyday on our communities (& churches)
* The effects of child abuse can be deep and long lasting
* Child abuse rarely stops without intervention and help.

### Types of Abuse:

* Physical
* Sexual
* Emotional
* Neglect

### Reporting of Child Abuse

Within the Province of Western Australia: the Anglican Church has established a Professional Standards Unit to deal with all reports of abuse: including child abuse. Therefore if you have a concern or complaint about sexual abuse or inappropriate behaviour please contact either:

* Bernard Hill on (08) 9425 7203 Email [psu@perth.anglican.org.au](mailto:psu@perth.anglican.org.au)

Guidelines for Leader Conduct and Screening

As part of the church’s “Duty of Care” it is important that leaders are screened and follow appropriate conduct guidelines. These guidelines are set out in a document titled “Faithfulness in Service”. This is to ensure that the people involved with children or youth ministry are suitable to work with young people.

*It is recommended that churches use the “Leader Application Form” as an acceptable process for screening leaders. The Duty of Care that the church has for young people entrusted to it need to be taken seriously. This application form helps fulfill that trust. All leaders in children and youth ministry are required to fill in the application form, agree with the “Children and Youth Ministry leader Applicant Statement” and be approved by the parish/ Ministry District Council.*

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CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY COUNCIL

Duty of Care Documentation

### Children and Youth Ministry Leader Applicant Statement

* I have carefully read the Guidelines for “Duty of Care”, “Leader Conduct and Screening” and “Safety, Hygiene and Emergencies” and agree to work under the principles detailed in them.
* I will support and work under the direction of the Parish/ Ministry District Priest and/or those responsible for oversight of children or youth ministry in the parish.
* I have not at any time been convicted of any offence involving children or young people.
* I recognize that I must behave and act according to the values that the community, society and the church establishes for those working with young people.
* I do not belong to a high risk category for infectious diseases.
* I am prepared to meet all Federal and State requirements for working with young people under the age of 18 years.

### Conduct and Vulnerability of Leaders

Adults and teenagers working with young people can sometimes be in a vulnerable position. Any accusation of neglect, physical or sexual abuse made against a leader, for whatever reason, regardless of truth or falsehood, can be devastating for the leader involved and have possible repercussions for the wider church community. The following are suggested conduct guidelines that will help a leader avoid being in a vulnerable position.

* Be wise in your conduct and relationships with young people.
* Only use appropriate physical contact with young people.
* Generally stay visible to others
* Be aware when young people feel vulnerable… (Shower time, changing, etc)
* Respect for young people’s privacy (especially in their rooms).
* Avoid placing yourself in a situation alone with a child (If possible inform another leader where and with whom you will be, and where possible, immediately before and after contact is made.)
* It is not wise to enter play with children if they are not fully dressed.
* It is not wise to allow young people to encroach on YOUR physical space in any way that make you feel uncomfortable.
* Follow the “Duty of Care”, “Leader Conduct and Screening”, and “Safety, Hygiene & Emergencies” guidelines.
* As a matter of policy in all Church activities: all adults should avoid situations where they are left alone with a young person under 18 years: in contexts that would allow any form of abuse to occur without discovery, unless the situation was one of unplanned necessity.

### Leaders' Vehicles

It is not wise to take young people in your own vehicle unless permission is received from parents. Follow the usual legislation safety requirements and road rules. It is advised that the driver must be licensed and not on “P” or “L” plates.

### Leader Application Form

#### Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Post Code \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Mob) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Email Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

##### Applying for Leadership in the parish of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This form only needs to be filled out once for this Parish/ Ministry District. Applications are to be renewed on a tri-annual basis. Once your application is accepted by the Diocese, it will cover you for involvement in children and youth ministry programmes for the life of that Synodical Tri-annual period. This form should be filed in a secure place by the Parish/ Ministry District secretary with a copy being sent to the Diocesan Office. This form is not transferable from Parish/ Ministry District to Parish/ Ministry District.

LEADER DECLARATION

* I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE “Duty of Care”, “Leader Conduct and Screening” and “Safety, Hygiene and Emergency” documentation and agree to work under the principles detailed in them.
* I agree to abide by the “Children and Youth Ministry Applicant Statement” spelt out on this form.
* The information contained in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.
* I give permission to the Parish/ Ministry District Priest to contact my referees provided: to ascertain my suitability and experience as a leader.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Referees

Your application must be endorsed by your Parish/ Ministry District Priest and be supported by two suitable referees. These are to be people of good standing in the community.

DECLARATION OF REFEREES

* To my knowledge the person named on this form is suitable to be a leader in Children and Youth Ministry in the above mentioned Parish/ Ministry District in the Anglican Diocese of Bunbury.
* I have no knowledge of this person at any time being convicted of any offence involving young people or any other reason that might reasonably preclude them from being involved in children and youth ministry.
* I believe that this person will behave and act according to the values that the community, society and the church establishes for those who work with young people.

REFEREE 1:

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position on the Church/Community \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

REFEREE 2:

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position on the Church/Community \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Certification:

I certify that I have checked the referees and personally support this Application.

Parish/ Ministry District Priest ………………………………………………..

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Duty of Care Documentation

Guidelines for Safety, Hygiene and Emergencies

### Safety

***To keep safety at an acceptable level it is recommended that leaders in children and youth ministry be diligent in the areas detailed in this document and adhere to these guidelines.***

### Minimise Risk of Injury

* Ensure appropriate instruction and supervision during activities
* Be careful of slippery surfaces
* Remove broken implements, glass etc
* Dispose of or correctly store all unneeded goods and equipment
* Inspect equipment, facilities and services for safe and good working order

### Each Leader Should Have an Awareness of:

* Children’s abilities in any given activity and the degree of skills necessary. *Any activity should be voluntary – no child should be forced to do any activity that is against their wishes providing that it doesn’t impose upon the rights or safety of others.*
* Individual health conditions, diet, allergies, medications and medical information of each child in your care.
* Where a child’s medication is, in an emergency (e.g. bee sting allergy, asthma, etc)
* The boundaries for program activities.
* Special emergency and safety procedures for particular activities.
* Recommended ratio of leaders to children for various activities.
* First Aid Procedures (it is a good policy to have one person with a current St John’s First Aid Certificate connected with the program)

### Be Aware of the Location of:

* First Aid Kit
* Nearest Telephone
* Emergency Exit Routes
* Fire Extinguishers
* Evacuation/Assembly Area (this needs to be explained to the children/youth)
* Nearest medical services

### When traveling on a bus/train: Follow regular bus rules:

* Don’t distract the driver
* Keep noise level to a minimum
* Remain seated as much as possible
* Seatbelts must be worn when fitted
* No part of the body to be out of the window
* Place bags securely under seats or shelves.

### Other Safety Requirements:

* Observe road safety when crossing or walking on the side of a road.
* Walking on hard surfaces, not running.
* Ensure all children are wearing appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity.
* Generally, footwear should be worn in the dining rooms after dark.
* In the Sun enforce the use of:
  + Hats and Sunscreen Wearing a shirt/ top Sunglasses (optional)

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Hygiene

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### Children’s Personal Hygiene:

* It is unwise for children to swap dirty clothing (especially hats and shoes)
* It is important that children wash their hands after going to the toilet and before meals.
* If there is any evidence of a child in your care having a contagious disease then that child must be taken immediately to the nearest medical centre for medical attention and the parents must be notified.

### Handling Food:

* Anybody working in the kitchen and handling food mush wash their hands thoroughly.
* Follow any of the usual food handling procedures for catering.
* A good guide for the prevention of contamination of food is:
* Keep hot food hot and cold food cold
* Keep food covered

### Emergencies

*In an emergency remember* TEAMWORK

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| T | Tell | Tell the overall program coordinator immediately in the case of an emergency or accident so that they can plan for appropriate action. |
| E | Emergency Services | (e.g. Ambulance, Police, Fire & Rescue) Give an accurate description of the nature of the emergency/accident and your exact location |
| **A** | Account | Account for all the people in your care (do a head count) |
| **M** | Media | Representative of the media should be firmly directed to the overall program coordinator and away from the children and leaders. |
| **W** | Witnesses | Witnesses could be important so collect names, addresses and their phone numbers. |
| **O** | Organise | Organise an orderly evacuation from the site at the direction of the authorities |
| **R** | Respond | Respond to enquiries from parents, guardians and the community in a factual and helpful way without apportioning blame or admitting responsibility |
| **K** | Keep in Touch | Keep in touch with people and leaders who were and weren’t involved in the emergency/accident, they may need on-going care or counseling as they may experience trauma/shock. |

Produced by the Anglican Diocese of Bunbury, Children and Youth Ministry Council: in consultation with and as a service to, the Parishes and Ministry Districts, within the Diocese!

*This document was last updated – 08.09.2009*